

Northport, NY—On Sunday, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) joined over a dozen local agencies and nonprofits to host a veterans and reservists workshop at the Northport Veterans Administration Hospital. Veterans and reservists attending the workshop received information on services available at the VA and experts were on hand to assist returning reservists and veterans with issues relating to employment, health care and disabilities.

“Veterans and reservists have fought valiantly to defend our country, but all too often come home to red tape and long waits for the services and benefits they were promised,” said Congressman Israel, who has secured over \$2.6 million in retroactive benefits for veterans in his district since taking office in 2001. “I’ve organized this workshop to help veterans, reservists and their families understand how to apply for benefits and to connect them with the services and assistance offered by a variety of government agencies and nonprofit organizations.”

As a Member of the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Israel fought to pass a veterans appropriations bill providing \$87.7 billion in crucial funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. This \$6.7 billion increase represents the single largest increase in funding for veterans health care in the 77-year history of the Veterans Administration.

Israel has also addressed reservists’ issues through legislation he introduced to protect deployed soldiers from disclosure, poor credit ratings, harassment and repossession. Israel’s legislation strengthens current protections offered to deployed soldiers and their families, which service members and financial institutions contend are difficult to enforce.

At Saturday’s workshop, Israel was joined by representatives from the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency, Nassau County Veterans Service Agency, United Way of Long Island, Beacon House, U.S. Small Business Administration, The Vet Center, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), TAPS, Wounded Warrior Program (A2W), TRICARE, NYS Regional Office (VARO), NYPD/SCPD Recruiter, NYS Division of Veterans Affairs, FDNY Recruiter, Long Island National Cemetery, Helmets to Hardhats, Rebuilding Together, and the Northport VA Medical Center.